

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 31-43 and 47-51 are pending.

In the response filed on July 7, 2003, claims 1-3 and 7-8, claims 10-30, and claims 44-46 were cancelled. Claims 15-24 which previously were withdrawn following a restriction requirement have now been cancelled.

Claims 31-39 were previously amended to begin with a definite article in response to the Examiner's objections.

No new amendments are made here, therefore no new matter is added by this response. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute amended, cancelled, and withdrawn claims or claims having breadth and scope similar to those as originally filed in this or another application having the same priority date as the present application.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. §112 ¶2

Claims 24-25, 29-30, 32-39, and 45-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 ¶2 in the Office Action of March 5, 2003.

Claims 24-25, 29-30, and 45-46 were previously cancelled by the Response of July 7, 2003, therefore this rejection is moot.

Dependent claims 32-39 were amended in the Response of July 7, 2003, to begin with a definite article. Claims 32-29 as amended recite "The composition of claim..." rather than "A composition of claim...".

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner maintained rejection of claims 1-3, 7-8, 10-13, 24-27, 29-30 and 44-46 in view of each of two references, De Simone et al. (J. Clin. Lab Anal. 3:345-349, (1998), and Visser et al. (WO 92/18536, published Oct. 29, 1992).

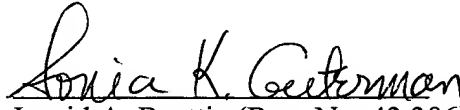
Claims 1-3, 7-8, 10-13, 24-27, 29-30 and 44-46, have been cancelled, therefore rejections of these claims in view of these references is moot. Applicants request that rejections of claims in view of these prior art references be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims and specifications are in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding these amendments and remarks, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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